(b) what are the measures taken by the Government to widen the tax net; and

(a) the steps taken to bring into tax net those who avoid and evade the in come tax?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE; MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) The percentage of income-tax payers to the total population in the country for relevant years is given below:

Year	%age of income tax payers to population
1960-61	0.26
1970-71	0.56
1980-81	0.68
1990-91	0.90
1991-92	0.92

(b) To widen the income-tax net various steps such as door-to-door surveys of business and commercial area$_s$ for identifying persons having taxable income are undertaken. From time to time new schemes such as Presumptive Tax Scheme are also introduced for this purpose;

(c) To check evasion and avoidance of income-tax, necessary legislative and administrative steps as deemed appropriate are taken from time to time The: deterrent measures taken by the Income-tax Department include the following:—

(i) survey operations;

(ii) search and seizure operations;

(iii) in depth investigation in cases selected for scrutiny;

(iv) continuous and systematic col-lection, and collation of information regarding various economic activities and dissemination of the same to tire assessing officers;

(v) imposition of penalties and launching of prosecution proceedings against persons found to be indulging in tax avasion.

To improve tax compliance and check avoidance, the tax rates have been made reasonable and tax laws and procedures have been simplified and streamlined. Publicity is given regarding citizens' tax obligations. Recently, with effect from financial year 1992-93, a simplified presumptive tax scheme under Section 115K of the Income-tax Act has been introduced.

Revision *of* the Status of R.R.Bs

908. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to accord State level status to the Regio nal Rural Banks;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to set up an 'Apex Rural Bank': and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) With a view to restruc-1 turing Regional Rural Banks (RRBs-, a number of models have been worked! out and effectiveness of each is being examined from all angles. This also includes the proposal for establishment of a National Rural Bank of India with a view to improve the rural banking system and increase the flow of credit to rural sector. However, no final decision has go far been taken in this regard.